"Péron continues, 'The young girl made herself more remarked every moment by the sweetness of her physiognomy and the equally amiable and spirituel expression of her looks; of a constitution much feebler than her brother and sister, she was more lively and passionate than they. M. Freycinet, who sat beside her, appeared to be more especially the object of her enticing ways, and the least experienced eye could have distinguished in the looks of this innocent pupil of nature that delicate shade which gives to simple playfulness a more serious and deliberate character. Even coquetry itself appeared to have been called to the aid of natural attractions. Having taken some charcoal in her hands, she in a moment made herself black enough to frighten one: what seemed most singular to us was the complacency with which this young girl appeared to regard us after this operation, and the confident air which this new ornament had spread over her face. While this was going on, the little children were imitating the grimaces and gestures of their parents, and nothing was more curious than to see these little negroes stamping their feet for joy at hearing our songs; they had unconsciously familiarized themselves with us, and towards the end of the interview, they made use of our notice as freely as if they had known us for a long time. Every little present we gave them filled them with pleasure, and redoubled their regard for us; altogether they appeared to us lively, frolicsome and mischievous. Ourê-Ourê had a rush bag of an elegant and peculiar

construction, which I very much desired to have, as this young girl also showed me some very amiable attentions. I ventured to ask her for her little bag; she immediately, without hesitation, put it into my hands, accompanying the gift with an obliging smile and some affectionate [sic] phrases, which I regretted to be unable to understand. In return, I offered her a handkerchief and a tomahawk, the use of which I showed her [41] brother, and which was a cause of astonishment and exclamation to the whole family. As night was approaching, we prepared to re-join our long boat; the old mother and the young woman with her children, except the biggest, remained in the hut; the others came with us; the path along which we walked bristled with shrubs and briars; our poor savages, being quite naked, seemed to have much to suffer from the scratches they received; we pitied Ourê-Ourê, but without appearing to perceive the numerous scratches which covered her thighs and stomach, she walked bravely in the middle of these thick brakes, chatting to M. Freycinet, without hope of making herself understood, getting angry at not being so, and at not being able to understand herself, accompanying her talk with enticing gestures and gracious smiles, which coquetry could not have rendered more expressive. In approaching our place of landing, we heard several musket shots, which caused great fright to our good companions, poor Ourê-Ourê, above all, was horribly afraid; her fears soon increased at the aspect of a numerous troop of our companions from the "Naturaliste" who came to meet us. After telling them of the good reception we had

met with at the hands of the aborigines, they hastened to load them with various presents; but nothing produced such a good effect as a long red feather which M. Breton gave to the young Ourê-Ourê; she jumped for joy, she called her father and brother, she cried she laughed, in a word she seemed intoxicated with pleasure and happiness. At last we boarded our two long boats. The good Van Diemen's Landers did not leave us for an instant, and when we pushed out, their sorrow showed itself in a most touching manner: they made signs for us to come and see them again; and as if to indicate the place to us, they lit a large fire on the little hillock of which I have spoken, and it seems they even passed the night there, for we saw a fire there until dawn. Thus ended our first interview with the inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land. All the details I have described are given with the most rigorous exactitude. The sweet confidence which the inhabitants had in us; the affectionate proof of good will which they lavished upon us, the sincerity of their demonstrations, the frankness of their manners, and the touching ingenousness of their caresses, all concurred in developing in us feelings of most tender interest.' (ibid. ch. xii. pp. 227-231)."

1: Roth--45 [3] (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 832

"I must not here omit to mention an interesting observation which I then made: it was that they had no idea of the action of embracing. [He tried to make them understand by practical demonstrations what an embrace is, but as their sole response was 'Nidegō' (I do not understand), he concluded that kissing and embracing were unknown to these people.]"

"No very striking or remarkable customs appear to have prevailed among the Tasmanians. We are told by Péron (p. 221), that kissing and embracing were seemingly unknown to them as salutations, for having thus saluted one of the natives, Péron adds: 'From the air of indifference with which he received this proof of our interest, it was easy to judge it had no meaning for him;' while in another place (p. 282) he says: 'I must not omit to mention an interesting discovery I then made [in an interview with fourteen aborigines]; it was, that they had no idea of the action of embracing.' He then proceeds to describe how he endeavoured to make them understand by practical demonstrations, but that their only response was Nidego (I do not know), leading him to believe that the custom of embracing was unknown to these people. He adds: 'I must, however, guard myself from stating this to be a positive fact, only adding here that I have never seen a savage, either in Van Diemen's Land or New Holland, embrace one of their own, or one of the opposite sex.' According to La Billardière (II. p. 33), the action of hand-shaking was not unfamiliar to them, judging from the following incident which he has recorded. A party of natives having been met with, 'I hesitated not,' he says, 'to go up to the oldest, who accepted... a piece of biscuit.... I then held out my hand to him as a sign [73] of friendship, and had the pleasure to perceive, that he comprehended my meaning very well: he gave me his, inclining himself a little, and raising at the same time his left foot, which he carried backward in proportion as he bent his body forward.' The

indifference, and possibly dislike, of the Tasmanians, to kissing, is amusingly illustrated in the following anecdote narrated by West (p. 89): 'A little boy, captured by a surveyor in 1828, ... on entering a room where a young lady was seated, was told to kiss her; after long hesitation, he went up to her, laid his fingers gently on her cheek, then kissed them, and ran out!' While they appear to have been demonstrative in their reception of friends, strangers were treated with indifference."